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Also makers of the famous "No. 4711" White Rose  
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overshadowed the bride, who was no slouch herself when it came to looks.

This wedding came off all right, judging by the published accounts, and the bride and bridegroom did the customary get-away to New York and Europe, leaving us to more important business.

**T**HE mystery surrounding the identity of the unknown rider created a cumulative interest that spread up and down and across the country the way a plague is said to. That it reached New York I know, because I received requests from two illustrated weeklies for stories and illustrations. Other writers got similar assignments; for accounts of the affair were published in periodicals as far away as San Francisco, London, Berlin, and Paris. The way a World's Championship baseball series rocks the nation or a cyclone makes its presence felt in Nebraska, the Roman standing race breathed delicious excitement into the arteries, veins, and understandings of Missourians and Kansans. The Mighty Harkins Show was cleaning up at every performance, and was getting talked about throughout the country in a way that meant fame and fortune for its proprietor before many seasons could elapse.

On the night before and the morning of the contest eight special trains ran to the town where our tents were pitched. I think I mentioned before that we often showed on fair grounds. This was one of the times, and as the crowd had to go to the lot to see the race it stood to reason that the tents would be jammed at both performances. Foreseeing this, Sam thoughtfully doubled the price of tickets, and put a motion picture show in a spare tent which we carried for emergencies such as "blowdowns" or fires. Trust the Mighty Harkins to overlook no such thing bet!

The town was filled with what sporting writers call "a seething mob." It was as much as your life was worth to try to jam a way into a restaurant, bar, soda water salesroom, or hotel. The Ladies' Aid Society, the Christian Endeavorers, the Band of Hope, the Dorcas Society, the Epworth League, and the Ladies of the Eastern Star had erected lemonade, sandwich, icecream, and watermelon booths in every other doorway, the toy balloon and squawker vendors were making season's records, and the crunch of peanuts could be heard for miles.

Sam and I drove to the fair grounds by a circuitous route to dodge the army of reporters and camera men, and on the way out he disclosed to me a fact that, if mentioned now, would rob this tale of whatever morsel of surprise it may possess. But, lest you wonder at my ignorance when you do get to this detail in the narrative, kindly remember that I had been with the show only a few weeks, and that during this time I had been too busy doing advance work to investigate many things that might be lurking behind the flaps of the dressing tent. At any rate, the immediate result of his disclosure was that we decided to enter a third contestant in the race,—Miss Florence McGuire, the little blond who rode the other team in the circus races, the twice-a-day competitor of the bewitching Señorita Jacinta Alhamar.

We paraded at ten-thirty in the morning, the parade got back to the lot about eleven-thirty, and the race was scheduled for one p.m. When he rented the fair grounds for the day Sam's contracting agent had no idea that the grandstand would be used, nor had Sam; but recent developments had caused him to utilize this unlooked for means of turning an honest penny, and long before the much-heralded contest was to start three thousand persons at fifty cents a head had elected to view the affair from the raised seats shaded from the rays of the blistering sun. Fifteen hundred more dollars for the Mighty Harkins!

**M**ISS DOROTHY had motored over from a nearby town early in the morning with her host, the stakeholder. The two horses had been shipped the day before. She told Sam and me before we left Kansas City not to expect to see her until the entrants were called to the starter's stand, and she was explicit in her insistence that no matter who won she wished to meet us with Jack and the fair Miss Señorita Jacinta Alhamar in the women's dressing tent immediately after the finish. We were to leave the rest to her.

Big Bill Dillon, the spiker with the side-show, made the announcement through a megaphone. He made it to a mob of fifteen thousand people who hung on fences, cluttered the lawn, jammed the paddock, sagged the grandstand, and covered all the infield that wasn't occupied by the circus wagons and tents. This is what he yelled—I know because I wrote it:

La-dees and Gentlemen! By kind permission of Mister Sam-vewell Harkins, sole owner of the Mighty Harkins Show, I take pleasure in announcing the most startling and neck contest in the history of international sport! A Roman standing race between the three most beautiful, skillful, and daring horse women in the known or the unknown world. Señorita Jacinta Alhamar, of Spain and Argentina, holder of the World's Championship, mounted on her magnificent Arabian steed Bolívar and Doll-i-var. Her colors yellow, Miss Florence McGuire, the added starter, the premier American circus rider. She is now a fee-shoer equestrienne with the Mighty Harkins Show! Her mounts David and Goliath were purchased at enormous expense from His Royal Highness the Grand Duke Alexis Rro-sha! Her colors blue!

The third contestant, La-dees and Gentlemen, is Miss New York, the Great Unknown. A mysterious young woman who hides her identity behind a black mask! She enters the hair-raising, brain-staggering, blood-congealing, heart-stopping contest purely for family reasons! If she wins, her stakes will be devoted to the cure of an only brother now seriously ill! This is her first race and her last! He mounts Uno and Ino! Her colors black!

The race one half mile—once around the track! The stakes one thousand dollars a side. Winner to take all! The starter, Mister Harry Rowell. The judges, the Honorable James Jones, Member of Congress, the Honorable Stephen Fink, Mayor of this city, and the Honorable Phineas Brown, Prose-cutting Attorney of this county!

Re-member the colors! Señorita Jacinta Alhamar wears yellow! Miss Florence McGuire wears blue! The Great Unknown wears black! I thank you!

Down the track from the direction of the fair grounds stables came a clatter of hoofs and a cloud of dust. The crowd stood on tiptoe and yelled. Out of the dust they appeared,—first the little blond McGuire in blue tights, next the Señorita, as pretty as a picture in yellow, and lastly Dorothy McCann. I was in the judges' stand with Jack and Sam, and was quite as curious as they or any of the fifteen thousand to get a look at this young lady. Her strapping bays had been polished until they fairly glistened in the sun, and the Human Mystery was dressed in a sleeveless black affair, the skirt of which came to about the knees. Her arms and neck were bare, and the upper part of her face was hidden by an ordinary black mask such as everyone has seen or worn at a masked ball. A black band round her head kept her hair from falling. The three riders scissored their horses past the grandstand while the crowd gaped, gasped, and applauded, then turned and drew up before the judges' stand.

"Looks as if she could ride some!" muttered Jack, scrutinizing the Great Unknown. "And take a peek at her horses! Some class to them!"

As the Hon. Phineas Brown explained to the contestants and the wild-eyed mob that foulings would cause disqualification I caught a nod and a smile from Miss Dorothy. Then the Hon. Brown grabbed the bell-rope and cried, "Ready for the start!" and the three pairs of strong-legged beasts were swung back, turned, and brought down on the run. The blond didn't turn quickly enough, and they were sent back. The second time they got away beautifully,—the yellow had the inside rail, the blue was alongside her, and the black-clad unknown next.

**T**ALK about your sights! This was one! Six horses going like mad, three slender girls bending low over them and cautiously jockeying for position, a thunders of pounding hoofs, a cloud of dust that traveled with lightning speed, and a burst of yells accompanied by thousands of waving hats, made a scene that had never been witnessed in Missouri and will probably never be witnessed again.

At the turn into the backstretch the Señorita was still on the inside going like the wind. Suddenly the crowd was electrified by seeing the girl in black swing her whip over each shoulder. Her mounts fairly jumped ahead of the blond-driven team, and from then on there was a race. Down the back stretch they tore like a four-horse team—the Señorita and the Unknown watching each other like a pair of cats, and the blond plunging through a cloud of dust that almost hid her from view. Jack and I watched them through glasses, and neither of us said a word until they had passed the quarter pole and started to round the turn into the homestretch.

"Now watch the yellow!" he whispered. "Watch her eat up the track! Come on, you Española girl! Come on, you Señorita Come on!"

It was anybody's race when they hit the stretch. The Unknown and the Spaniard were riding neck and neck, and the blond girl on the "Grand Duke's" horses was half a length behind. But it was apparent to me at least that the masked rider was out to whip the Spaniard, and it was equally ob-